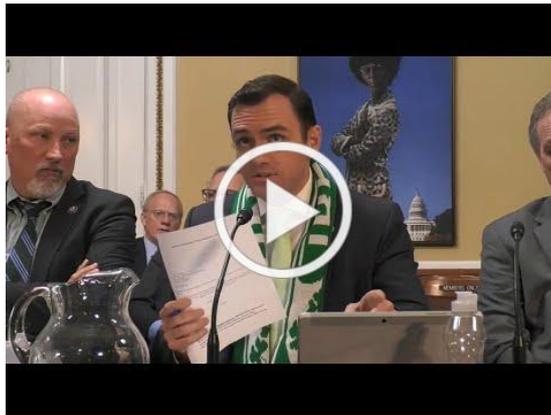


# U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Says overwhelming majority of members are lying when they proxy vote

Posted on Thursday, Mar 17, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3/17/22  
Contact: [Jordan Dunn](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today testified before the House Rules Committee on proxy voting and remote committee proceedings. During his testimony, Gallagher slammed members for lying and abusing the proxy voting process not for COVID-19, but to fundraise, attend political gatherings, or go to space launches.

In part, Rep. Gallagher said, “I don’t think this is primarily about spending time together. I don’t think it’s about partisanship. I don’t think it’s about technology, as the Majority Leader argued. I think it’s just about the truth. Because when you proxy vote...you have to sign a piece of paper that says ‘I am unable to physically attend proceedings in the House chamber due to the ongoing public health emergency.’ That’s what you’re signing your name to. There’s no dispute about that. It’s clear in the language. So we know...the overwhelming majority of members proxy voting are lying when they sign this piece of paper.”

Rep. Gallagher has consistently called proxy voting unconstitutional, arguing that it makes Congress [non-essential](#) and is being [exploited](#) by members of Congress. He [introduced a resolution](#) - last year that would end proxy voting.

Watch his full testimony [here](#), or read his remarks below:

“I’d like to make a slightly different argument than some of my colleagues. I don’t think this is primarily about spending time together. I don’t think it’s about partisanship. I don’t think it’s about technology, as the Majority Leader argued. I think it’s just about the truth. Because when you proxy vote, I’ve never proxied but my understanding is, you have to sign a piece of paper that says ‘I am unable to physically attend proceedings in the House chamber due to the ongoing public health emergency’, ie Coronavirus. That’s what you’re signing your name to. There’s no dispute about that. It’s clear in the language. So we know...the overwhelming majority of members proxy voting are lying when they sign this piece of paper. We’ve all heard the anecdotes of both Democrats and Republicans going to fundraisers. I’m not saying only the other side has abused this.

“Let me prove why this is a massive lie to you mathematically. The average number of proxy votes on a normal, full day in Congress this session is about 68. If you crunch the numbers, magically, on fly in and fly out days, those numbers can skyrocket to around 100. The average number of proxy votes on a normal, full day in Congress this session is 68. On fly in and fly out days, So what happened? Are people getting COVID on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursday, Fridays, but not Wednesdays? No. They’re abusing proxy voting so they can have a longer weekend, because it’s an inconvenience to come to DC. And in the process signing their name to a lie on this piece of paper.

“Now, if you want to make a different argument, I think Mr. Perlmutter has made a high integrity argument. He openly says he wants a more libertarian system where everyone can proxy vote. I disagree, but that’s an entirely different thing. Then you would need to advance a proposal whereby people can sign their names saying, ‘I need to proxy vote because of XYZ’, not because of COVID. Because it’s not about COVID. Indeed, we just had at least four members of Congress on this panel admit, against interest, that it’s not about COVID. It’s about birthdays, graduation parties. It’s about the birth of children. It’s about climate change. It’s about strokes. Those are different things. So I actually concede the point to the Chairman that I’m not suggesting proxy voting is causing unprecedented polarization...I think it is exacerbating a lack of trust in the institution. Because so many members are lying. Put differently, one argument was made that we’re disenfranchising voters if their members can’t proxy. Are you not disenfranchising voters if you’re lying to them? Or someone made an appeal to the integrity of the institution, saying if you proxy vote..it will retain the integrity of the institution in a modern age. How can you maintain the integrity of the institution if you’re institutionalizing lies? It makes no sense.

“So I’m happy to have the different argument about proxy voting for other reasons. I will still oppose it, and if you put forward that proposal, I suspect you’d lose that vote. But there is no question, it is obvious and inarguable, to the point of being self-evident now, that people are abusing proxy voting, and every single day we’re countenancing scores of lies by our colleagues. If nothing else, we have to change what’s on this piece of paper and stop lying. And with that, I yield.”